

New law (Ch.C. Art. 403) provides that if a case is referred for mediation, the costs of mediation may be taxed as court costs, which shall not exceed \$50.

New law (Ch.C. Art. 435) states that the purpose of mediation is to encourage and assist parties to reach their own mutually acceptable settlement by facilitating communication, helping to clarify issues and interests, fostering joint problem-solving, and exploring settlement alternatives.

New law (Ch.C. Art. 436) provides specific definitions for "approved register", "mediation", "mediation parties", and "mediator".

New law (Ch.C. Art. 437) provides that at any time the court may order the referral for mediation in any proceeding authorized by the Children's Code, except domestic abuse assistance proceedings and the informal family services plan procedure. New law provides that the referral order shall recite that while the parties must attend a scheduled mediation session and must attempt to mediate in good faith, they are not required to reach an agreement.

New law (Ch.C. Art. 438) provides for selection and appointment of a mediator. New law provides that the mediator must disclose impartiality. Requires a mediator to furnish satisfactory evidence of his qualifications. New law provides grounds for the revocation of a mediator's appointment.

New law (Ch.C. Art. 439) provides for qualifications of a mediator.

New law (Ch.C. Art. 440) provides that the court may stay the proceedings and order a review of the mediation within 60 days of the referral, which can be extended for an additional 30 days.

New law (Ch.C. Art. 441) provides for confidentiality of communications of mediation proceedings. New law provides for disclosure of certain information under limited circumstances.

New law (Ch.C. Art. 442) provides that either party may withdraw or terminate participation in mediation. New law provides for termination of the mediation by the mediator.

New law (Ch.C. Art. 443) provides that if an agreement is reached by the parties, then the mediator draft a mediation agreement and shall submit such to the court. New law provides that if no agreement is reached, the mediator shall report such without violating the policy of confidentiality.

New law (Ch.C. Art. 444) provides that the court has the continuing responsibility for monitoring the conduct of the mediator. New law authorizes the court to order the mediator to prepare reports and to seek evaluations of the mediator's competence from the parties, counsel, or other participants. New law provides that the court may institute proceedings for contempt against a mediator, party, counsel, or other participant for violation of the provisions of this Chapter.

New law (Ch.C. Art. 445) provides that each court is authorized to adopt additional local rules as needed in order to implement mediation to resolve disputes in juvenile proceedings.

New law (Ch.C. Art. 603) includes mediators appointed pursuant to Chapter 6 as mandatory reporters.

New law provides for qualifications of a mediator. (Art. 439)

Effective August 15, 1999.

(Amends Ch.C. Art. 405(C); Adds Ch.C. Arts. 435-445 and 603(13)(f))